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EXAMINER INTERVIEW AGENDA
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In re Application of:)
    LEARMONTH   )   Examiner: Woo, Isaac M.
Serial No. 09/778,299   )   Art Unit: 2172
Filing Date: February 6, 2001   )
For: Normalizing Transaction Processing)
    For Search Engine   )
_____)

The Applicant would like to discuss the claim limitations in Claim 1 of:

b) normalizing said search criteria so as to obtain normalized search criteria; and
c) transmitting said normalized search criteria to a search engine.

I.   Claim 1 recites limitations with respect to receiving search queries from users and "normalizing" the queries to form a "normalized search query", which is passed to a search engine.

    a) As claimed, the limitations of "normalizing" and "normalized search criteria" are neither taught nor suggested by the prior art.

    b) while limitations are not read into the claims from the specification, claims are read as would be understood by one of ordinary skill in the art in light of the specification.

    c) the specification, as read by one of ordinary skill in the art, provides guidance in interpreting the limitations of "normalizing" and "normalized search criteria".

    d) The prior art cited in the rejection (Hagmann) discloses a system that builds data structures that are used to "optimize" elements in Hagmanns system's query processing activities.

        i) The rejection appears to be equating the claimed "normalizing" with the prior art's "optimizing" (see, e.g., rejection page 5). Applicants respectfully assert that the claimed "normalizing" is neither taught nor suggested by the "optimizing" disclosed in the prior art.

        Hagmann teaches a system that optimizes how to respond efficiently to queries that may be affected by events:

            builds data structures that decide <u>which</u> query to run, based on which queries may be impacted by events
            decides how to run queries alone and together. (col. 6, lines 54-61).

        ii) Hagmann effectively turns database operation inside out (col. 1, lines 33-40). This teaching is inconsistent with the limitations of Claim 1. Hagmann's system responds to events (e.g., a package is delivered) by determining which outstanding queries need to be run (i.e., are affected by the changed data due to the event) and runs those queries. (See also, col. 6, lines 5-11).

        iii) Hagmann fails to send the "optimized" result on to a search engine. Therefore, even if the result of optimization were, for the sake of argument, equated to the claimed normalization, the claimed "transmitting said normalized search criteria to a search engine" is not taught or suggested by Hagmann.

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II.   Applicants would also like to discuss the following proposed claim amendment:

1.   (Proposed Amendment)

b) normalizing said search criteria so as to obtain a single normalized search criteria for said plurality of search criteria; and
c) transmitting said single normalized search criteria to a search engine.

        a) To the extent that Hagmann may teach placing a search request into what Hagmann refers to as a "normal form", Hagmann's only example teaches breaking a single query into two separate queries in a case in which an "OR" clause is used in a "where expression". This provides multiple entry points to satisfy the original query, and is thus inconsistent with the claimed limitation.

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